

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 TRSE-00 DPW-01 /092 W

-----231200 010383 /22

R 231104Z FEB 77

FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6755

INFO AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

CINCPAC

USUN NEW YORK 659

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E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: PFOR, CE, VN

SUBJECT: SRV DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER'S VISIT TO SRI LANKA

REF: COLOMBO 0589

1. VISIT OF SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM (SRV) VICE MINISTER
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, PHAN HIEN, TO SRI LANKA FEBRUARY 17-19 WAS
GIVEN FRONT PAGE PLAY IN LOCAL PRESS. WITH THE CONSPICUOUS ABSENCE OF

THE PRC, HIEN WAS GREETED AT THE AIRPORT BY REPRESENTATIVES OF
COMMUNIST

BLOCK COUNTRIES WITH EMBASSIES IN COLOMBO. PHAN HIEN LABELED HIS VISIT
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AS A GOODWILL TOUR TO PROMOTE ECONOMIC, SCIENTIFIC, AND CULTURAL
COOPERATION. HE MET WITH THE PRIME MINISTER AND WITH THE DEPUTY
MINISTER

OF DEFENCE AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS (MDFA) ON BILATERAL MATTERS AND WITH
THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND JUSTICE ON THE UPCOMING NACC MEETING
IN NEW DELHI.

2. HIEN SPOKE FREELY TO THE PRESS, PRAISING SRI LANKA'S DEEP SYMPATHY AND VALUABLE SUPPORT TO VIETNAM'S CAUSE. ON SRV FOREIGN POLICY, HE ASSERTED THT SRV GOVERNMENT HAD DONE ITS BEST TO CONSOLIDATE AND STRENGTHEN SOLIDARITY AND COOPERATIVE RELATIONS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD. IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, VIETNAM, HE SAID, IS PREPARED TO ESTABLISH RELATIONS AND COOPERATION ON THE BASIS OF (1) MUTUAL RESPECT FOR THE INDEPENDENCE AND NON-INTERFERENCE IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS, (2) PROHIBITION AGAINST ALLOWING FOREIGN COUNTRIES TO USE ONE'S TERRITORY AS A BASE FOR DIRECT OR INDIRECT AGGRESSION, AND (3) ESTABLISHMENT OF ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL EXCHANGES AND SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES IN A SPIRIT OF EQUALITY.

3. HIEN NOTED TH AT VIETNAM NOW HAS DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH MEMBERS OF THE SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS (ASEAN), EXCEPT WITH THAILAND WHICH HE CLAIMED HAD VIOLATED AGREEMENTS WITH VIETNAM, ESPECIALLY AFTER THE RECENT MILITARY COUP. HE ALSO SAID THAT THERE IS GOOD REASON TOHOPE THAT US-VIETNAM RELATIONS WILL ALSO IMPROVE.

4. SPEAKING ON ECONOMIC MATTERS, HIEN MENTIONED THAT VIETNAM HAS ASSESSED THE DAMAGE CAUSED TO VIETNAM DURING WAR AND THAT RESULTS WILL BE QUANTIFIED IN REPORTS TO BE PRESENTED AT WORLD FORA, SUCH AS THE UN. FIGURES ON EXTENT OF DAMAGE, HOWEVER, ARE STILL CLASSIFIED. ALTHOUGH HE DID NOT ELABORATE, HIEN CLAIMED THAT VIETNAM WELCOMES FOREIGN INVESTMENT SUBJECT TO "CERTAIN CONDITIONS" AND THAT INVESTORS WOULD BE GIVEN 10 TO 15 YEAR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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GUARANTEES.

5. ALTHOUGH NOT REPORTED IN LOCAL PRESS, AP CORRESPONDENT HERE FILED REPORT BASED ON SECOND HAND INFORMATION WHICH EMBASSY HAS BEEN UNABLE TO CONFIRM THAT HIEN ALSO SAID THAT US CANNOT BARGAIN FROM POSITION OF STRENGTH BECAUSE "WE WON THE WAR." CONTINUING HEIN REPORTEDLY SAID THAT PRESIDENT CARTER HAD EXPRESSED A DESIRE TO SENT A REPRESENTATIVE TO VIETNAM TO DISCUSS QUESTIONS SUCH AS AMERICAN MIA'S AND THAT VIETNAM PREPARED TO RECEIVE US EMISSARY AND RESUME PARIS TALKS IN ACCORDANCE WITH PARIS AGREEMENT, BUT THAT US MUST MEET OBLIGATION OF MAKING WAR REPARATIONS. HE STRESSED FURTHER THAT SRV IS A SOVEREIGN NATION WITH A RIGHT TO UN MEMBERSHIP AND THAT US MUST NOT USE VIETNAM'S REQUEST FOR ADMISSION TO UN AS A BARGAINING LEVER.

6. ACCORDING TO AP REPORT, HIEN DENIED ANY VIETNAMESE INVOLVEMENT IN THAILAND. HE BLAMED "SLANDEROUS STATEMENTS" ABOUT VIETNAMS BY THAIS AND THAI ATTEMPTS TO BRING BACK US TROOPS TO THAILAND AS CREATING BARRIERS TO GOOD THAI-SRV RELATIONS.

7. COMMENT: MDFA OFFICIAL WHO COORDINATED HIEN'S VISIT
CHARACTERIZED IT AS PURELY A GOOD WILL VISIT INVOLVING NO REALLY
SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS OR AGREEMENTS BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES. HE SAID,

HOWEVER, THAT VISIT HAD BEEN FRUITFUL BECAUSE THERE HAD
BEEN A USEFUL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS. CONSENSUS OF VIEWS OF SRI
LANKA OFFICIALS WHO DEALT WITH HIEN SEEMS TO BE THAT HE
DISPLAYED A HEALTHY AND ENCOURAGING FLEXIBILITY IN DISCUSSING
POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS TO VIETNAM'S ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL PROBLEMS.
MDFA OFFICIAL EXPRESSED SOME SURPRISE AT HIEN'S WILLINGNESS
TO TALK AND AT HIS HAVING ACTIVELY SOUGHT OPPORTUNITIES TO
MEET WITH PRESS. HIEN MAY VERY WELL HAVE BEEN SEEKING A FORUM
FOR EXPRESSING CURRENT SRV ATTITUDES.
REED

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Message Attributes

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Sent Date: 23-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
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